

DESERT VOICE

December 21, 2005

Serving the U.S. and Coalition Forces in Kuwait



**Back in
Kuwait**

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DESERT VOICE

Volume 27, Issue 22

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On the cover

Spc. Michael R. Noggle

Al Franken, comedian, leads this year's USO Sergeant Major of the Army Hope and Freedom Tour through the Middle East.

Servicemembers celebrate Christmas together

Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb
CFLCC Commanding General

Christmas is a time traditionally spent with friends, family and loved ones, exchanging gifts and taking part in our religious celebrations-unless you are a Soldier, Sailor, Marine, Airman, Coast Guardsmen, or Soldier in slacks - but we know how to find a Christmas tree in the desert!!

This year as you celebrate Christmas and New Year's, many of us away from those family and friends so dear to us, may each of you find your own special joy in knowing that, because of you, America is a safer and a better place; because of your personal example, the world sees America as a beacon for good; and, because of you, America will win.

During this holiday season I would like for each of you to ponder upon our very beginnings, the earliest days of our nation. Preserving liberty has always required tremendous personal sacrifice. Like our forefathers in previous conflicts, the Soldier shoulders the heavy burden. You are sacrificing the comforts of home and foregoing the holiday season with your family. But by doing so, you are giving hope to our fellow

Americans and have given that shared hope and freedom to 50 million newly free Afghans and Iraqis, as well as countless million others around the world. What a gift this thing freedom is!

I always get pumped as I travel among you. Whether watching Navy corpsmen do their thing in a clinic, a Coastie doing environmental checks, a 97 pound Soldier wheeling her HET into another convoy north, our Airmen making sure the troops get into and out of Iraq or Afghanistan for R&R, our Marines pulling the LCAT ashore at KNB or our Soldiers in slacks providing the expertise in every functional area, I am continually impressed by the dedication, professional confidence and competence and enthusiasm displayed by the troops in this command. And that is because you are all dedicated to your mission. Regardless of your branch or service, you represent the very best of our country.

I wish I could shake every one of your hands and personally thank each of you for your outstanding service throughout the year. While I can not physically do it, I can certainly say a prayer for you, for your continued resolve and commitment to America, and

for your family at home. I thank you as an American, for all Americans, for what you do and how you do it every day.

It is an honor to command Third U.S. Army, Army Central Command and the Coalition Forces Land Component Command and to serve with you during this war

Even though we are at war and may be far from home and family, pause to celebrate the promise of peace on earth with your battle buddies. To all Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coasties, and our Soldiers in slacks, and our coalition partners and allies, I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and best wishes for continued health and well-being in the coming year - PATTON'S OWN.



Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb



Sgt. Maj. Charlton Pitter, C7 sergeant major, is decorated with Christmas decorations during a game at the Special Troops Battalion's Christmas party Saturday.

Spc. Michael R. Noggle

National Guard celebrates 369 years of patriotism

Sgt. Kara Greene

115th ASG PAO

For 369 years, Army National Guard Soldiers have taken off their civilian hats and strapped up their boots during their country's time of need.

Soldiers were reminded of their valuable heritage during a birthday celebration at Camp Arifjan Dec. 14.

The National Guard originated as militias, comprised of Massachusetts farmers, Dec. 13, 1636, to protect the community and later transformed into citizen Soldiers taking up arms against the British. After the successful war for independence, American militia proved to the world that civilian volunteers could be molded into trained fighting men, thus forging the high tradition of the National Guard.

Soldiers from several states commemorated the National Guard's birthday by indulging in a birthday cake and watching a videotaped birthday message from Lt. Gen. Steven Blum, National Guard Bureau chief.

The message from Blum reminded Soldiers the oldest component of America's Armed Forces' role in the nation's defense

has transformed since its conception in the colonial farmlands.

"We've broken away from our traditional role of protecting our states and providing assistance after a natural disaster," said Col. Patrick Murphy, National Guard affairs chief, planner of the birthday event.

On each camp in Kuwait a birthday cake was available to troops to join in the celebration and reflect on the Guard's latest role in the Armed Forces.

"The National Guard role now focuses on the overall defense," Murphy said.

Recently, National Guard units are deployed around the world in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, he said.

The Guard has developed into a critical part of the nation's homeland defense state-side as first responders, on the international level as global peacekeepers and as a reckoning force fighting the war on terror.

The National Guard has contributed to



Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

Maj. Gen. James A. Kelley, Third U.S. Army/Army Central Command/Coalition Forces Land Component Command deputy commander, serves the cake with the help of a National Guard Soldier at one the National Guard birthday celebrations.

every major military campaign in the nation's history with discipline and courage. Nineteen Army Guard divisions were deployed in World War II, 138,000 Army guardsmen were mobilized for the Korean War, more than 63,000 Army guardsmen were called up for the 1991 Gulf War and thousands are currently serving in the War on Terrorism in Southwest Asia.

Son follows father's military footsteps

Fighting for different countries, decades apart

Spc. Robert Adams

Assistant Editor

His father fought alongside United States Armed Forces as a soldier in the South Vietnamese Army during the Vietnam War. Now three decades later, Spc. Khoa Van is fighting for his family's freedom in the War on Terrorism as a Soldier in the U.S. Army National Guard.

Van, of Vietnamese decent, recently deployed to Camp Victory and is now fighting in the same Army that helped train his father.

He moved to the United States with his family when he was a child and grew up in Worcester, Mass.

He didn't know much about his father's military experience but said he wanted to experience military life and joined the National Guard in April 1998.

"I just wanted to do something to give something back to U.S.A.," Van said.

"It's just my way of saying thank you to America for everything they've done for my family," he said.

Van never got the chance to fight in a war during his two-years in the military and was placed in the Individual Ready Reserve.

Five years later, he was recalled to duty in a land and with a unit foreign to him. Van, who owns a business back home, never hesitated to go when he received the letter to deploy. His family encouraged him as well and is taking care of his business while he is away.

Though he and his father had different wartime missions but

will be war veterans just the same.

Van said he remembers one story his father told him about his war experience. While hanging from a rope attached to a helicopter, his father shot down at

"It's just my way of saying thank you to America for everything they've done for my family."

Spc. Khoa Van

first Van said he didn't know what to expect.

Not only that, he also didn't know the people he was going to war with or what they would be like.

"I didn't even know where Kentucky was but now I see they are friendly and that they have good family support," Van said.

Van serves as the Morale, Welfare and Recreation monitor



Van

at Victory and his leaders feel he has made an impact on other Soldiers.

"You could tell it was tough for him coming from another state," said Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Couch, MWR supervisor.

"He was shy at first, but now he jokes and laughs with everyone," he said.

The 28-year-old has also made it a point to improve his level of physical fitness and help others do the same.

"The physical training is great and it is getting me back into good shape," he said.

Even though he is far away from his immediate family, Van said he's been treated like one of the family.

Van said he is proud to have a good family back home and now one here.

Vietnam vet earns sixth combat patch



Spc. Marcos Alices Kinch CFLCC PAO

A young Soldier with the Big Red One patch on his shoulder sat in a room filled with Soldiers anxiously anticipating information about how they would serve their nation in a war-torn Vietnam.

On a day this airborne infantry Soldier would never forget, a young staff sergeant silenced the room with his footsteps. The sergeant glanced over the room filled with enlisted Soldiers when he said "I want you to look to your right, look to your left," he paused. "Half of you won't even make it back home."

This was not a scene from a Vietnam movie, but the memory of Master Sgt. James C. Manis, 1st Personnel Command replacement operations noncommissioned officer in charge. After thirty-six years of service and five combat patches, Manis earned his sixth combat patch Nov. 9 with the 1st PERSCOM for his role in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"A combat patch, to me, indicates that a person is putting him or herself in harm's way for a belief in a set of moral principles," said Master Sgt. Maxcell Culpepper, 1st PERSCOM postal supply NCOIC.

A Soldier is allowed to wear the shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, also known as the combat patch, when his unit has participated in or supported combat operations in a combat zone. Manis earned five

combat patches during his two-year Vietnam tour.

As a young boy from Dalton, Ga., Manis joined the Army in April 1967. He signed up for the infantry. At the time, Soldiers who joined the infantry received airborne training. He attended basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and advance individual training at Fort Gordon, Ga.

Immediately after completing AIT, he was sent to war as a private at the age of 17.

According to Manis, all the Soldiers in his AIT were sent directly to Vietnam with the exception of three or four who were receiving hardship duty discharges or were going to other schools. He arrived in theater Oct. 6, 1969. He was instantly promoted to the rank of private first class when he landed in Vietnam.

During his time in Vietnam, Manis wore several patches. He earned his first patch with the 1st Infantry Division, patrolling the rice patties and flatlands of South Vietnam for six months.

He also earned combat patches with the 4th Infantry Division, 1st Calvary Division, 75th Rangers Regiment and Vietnamese Rangers.

"I could not put a price on any one of my patches because they all kind of wear their own individual experience," Manis said.

Manis alternates the wear of each patch. He believes each patch tells its own tale. The Vietnamese Ranger patch tells about his four month experience training Vietnamese sol-

diers. The 4th Inf. Div. patch reminds Manis of the days he hiked the highlands of Vietnam.

He showed his support by wearing his 4th Inf. Div. patch when the division captured Saddam Hussein in a tiny cellar near Tikrit, Iraq Dec. 13, 2003. He says it has a special place in his heart because his father also wore the patch as a member of Company K, 12th Regiment in World War II.

Arriving here with about 37 totaled years in the active Army, Army Reserve and National Guard, Manis continues to drive on. He uses his understanding of all three components of the Army to complete his duties here. He said he plans to stay in the military until he turns the age of 60.

"Every NCO and junior-enlisted Soldier owes it to themselves to try to improve the military," Manis said.

He advises Soldiers to take advantage of any type of NCO education to further their career and skills in the Army.

Manis arrived in Kuwait Oct. 6, the same date he arrived in Vietnam 36 years ago. He has drawn from the experiences that earned him his combat patches to lead 1st PERSCOM Soldiers.

He said he will never forget the time he spent in Vietnam, especially the first day he arrived. After receiving his briefing from the young staff sergeant, he comprehended the true meaning of the 1st Infantry Division motto: No mission too difficult; no sacrifice too great; duty first.



Working together

Spc. Janine Coogler

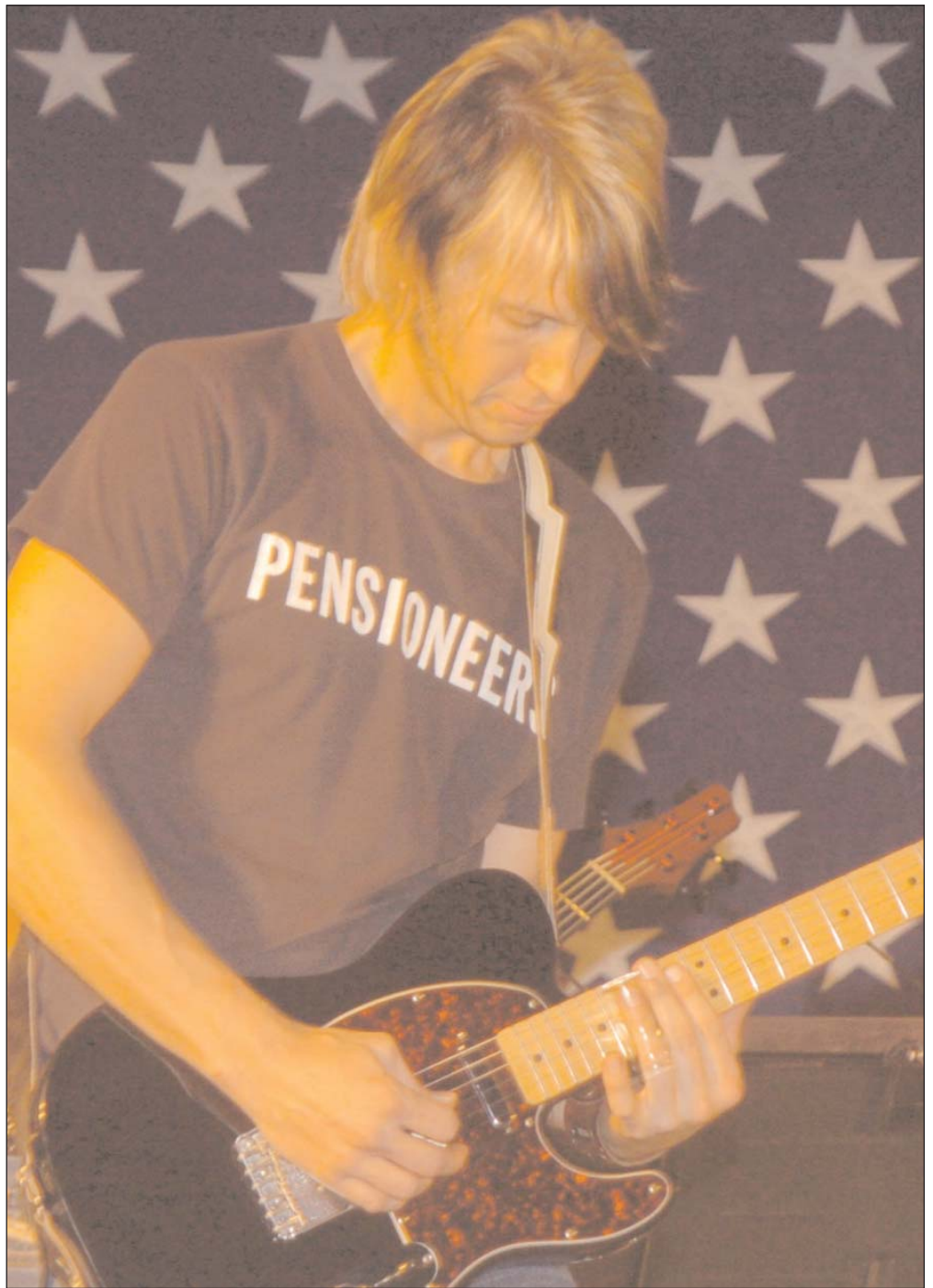
Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Ashe, Third U.S. Army/Army Central Command/Coalition Forces Land Component Command greets Korean Command Sgt. Maj. Seung Ho Ryu, joint chief of staff command sergeant major, Korean Command Sgt. Maj. Joon Sup Byun, air force command sergeant major and Korean Command Sgt. Maj. Woon Ku Moon, army command sergeant major, during a courtesy office call Dec. 8. The sergeants major discussed the contributions of Korean troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



(Top) Craig Morgan (left), Keni Thomas (middle) and Mark Wills (right) visit with Pfc. Woodrow Carter at the Expeditionary Medical Facility-Kuwait.

(Middle) Sgt. Maj. of the Reserve Michelle Jones jokes with the audience as Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston and Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps John Estrada look on.

(Bottom) Lynlee Allen (left) and Misty Cleveland (right), Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders, entertain the Camp Arifjan crowd with a dance.



Photos by Spc. Michael R. Noggle

Mike Wilkes, Keni Thomas' lead guitarist, plays slide guitar at the USO show on Camp Arifjan Thursday.



The participants of the USO Sergeant Major of the Army Hope and Freedom Tour pose for a group photo.

USO tour

Sergeant Major of Army, friends entertain servicemembers in Kuwait

Spc. Michael R. Noggle
CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Sometimes the best gifts come in small packages, but that wasn't the case during this year's holiday season for servicemembers in Kuwait as the USO Sergeant Major of the Army Hope and Freedom Tour made its first stop through the Middle East Dec. 14.

The show, which has visited overseas servicemembers since 1999, was hosted by Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, accompanied by Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps John Estrada, Command Sgt. Maj. Michelle Jones, sergeant major of the Army Reserve, celebrities and musical artists.

"This tour has become tradition," Preston said. "We wanted to give something back to the servicemembers for all their hard work and commitment to the mission in the Middle East."

With the return of Al Franken, comedian, Mark Wills, country singer, the Army band and a couple of Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders, the show featured some new additions with Craig Morgan, country, Keni Thomas, country, Jakob and Rachel Washington from SoulJahz, hip-hop and Traylor Howard, actress.

From the moment they stepped foot in

Kuwait, the group wanted to do more than entertain the servicemembers. The group traveled to different camps signing autographs and taking pictures with individuals, and visited wounded Soldiers from Iraq at the Expeditionary Medical Facility-Kuwait at Camp Arifjan.

"It was a humbling moment to see those Soldiers in the hospital," Rachel said. "Seeing these guys was a shock for everyone in the group."

After spending time and talking to the patients at EMF-Ku, the group prepared for their evening act. As thousands of servicemembers gathered around the Zone 6 stage at Arifjan, the night was perfect for a show.

Setting the mood throughout the evening with their stand-up comedy act, Howard escorted a disguised Franken as Saddam Hussein in shackles. "It's great to be back in Kuwait," Franken proclaimed.

"It's a real honor to meet the servicemembers," Franken said. "I never served in the military, so I feel this is a little way I can give something back."

The show never skipped a beat as former Army Rangers Morgan and Thomas performed their top hits "That's what I love about Sunday" and "Flags of Our Fathers: A Soldier's Story" with the help from the Army

band providing backup sound.

Between the country singers acts was another newcomer to the USO show, SoulJahz. A band with an upbeat genre of music directed toward men and women serving in the armed forces.

"It was unbelievable," Jakob said. "Coming out here and performing for everyone was a blessing for us more than them."

In the closing act, Mark Wills had everybody yelling encore after his hit singles "Jacob's Ladder" and "Crowd Goes Wild."

"For the last three years, this has been one of my favorite things to do," Wills said. "People talk about how it's a sacrifice, but it's not a sacrifice when it's the least we could do."

The show concluded with the Army band leading everyone with "Stand by Me" joined in by the servicemembers and celebrities on stage.

"The entertainers volunteered to be here just like our servicemembers volunteer to be here," Jones said. "They wanted to reach out and thank them from the bottom of their heart and thank them for their service."

"I feel this is a privilege and an honor to be here," Franken said. "We wanted them to know that every American is supportive of them and grateful for their services."



Rachel Washington, SoulJahz, does a sound check before the USO show.



Former Army Ranger, Keni Thomas, country singer, sings his hit single "Flag of Our Fathers: A Soldiers Story."



Al Franken disguised as a Saddam Hussein is escorted by master of arms personnel during his act. Traylor Howard welcomes a detained Franken as he greets the crowd at Camp Arifjan.

Tie-Down Course ties unit, equipment together

Sgt. Crystal Rothermel
143rd TRANSCOM PAO

A Camp Arifjan unit combined expertise, equipment and a sunny afternoon for first-class training on tie-down procedures.

The 233rd Transportation Company, based at Fort Knox, Ky., laid on the training to review proper tie-down methods on various trucks and types of equipment.

"We are covering the basics," said Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Plant, a 233rd truck master.

"Being a heavy truck company, we deal with all types of wheeled vehicles... We are trying to maintain a level of proficiency," he said.

This is the unit's fourth tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. As in previous tours, the unit transports equipment throughout Kuwait and Iraq. While most of the Soldiers are veterans, the equipment they carry has changed. For the unit, this new equipment means new tie-down procedures. The training was designed to eliminate confusion about how each type of equipment is properly secured to trucks.

"This is good because we are training the new Soldiers and sustaining the old," said Sgt. Aaron Osborn, a veteran driver with the unit.

The Soldiers gathered around big heavy-equipment transporters with their safety belts and Kevlars in hand. The trainers, all comrades within the unit, stood above them on the trucks to explain proper and improper methods.

Soldiers sometimes overestimate the strength of the chains, fail to cross the chains when securing equipment on beds, forget to use chock blocks or binders, or just choose the wrong tie-down points, Plant explained.

"You cannot have metal to metal," explained Sgt. Delewis Lawrence.

"You have to use chock blocks to absorb the shock from the roads," he said.

After the lecture, Soldiers took turns working in pairs to properly secure three equipment items representing the types the unit is currently hauling; an M1070 HET, M4K Forklift, and an M931 5-Ton truck. Plant said he thinks progress in Iraq has brought evolutionary changes to

the transportation mission.

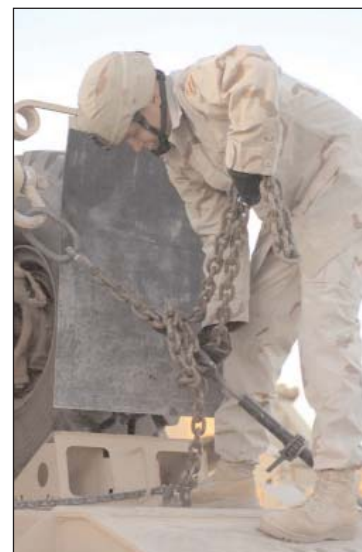
"What I notice is that with the elections and building of a new government in Iraq, we are not actually seeing a lot of heavy equipment like we were before," Plant said. "Now, it's mostly M1114s and gun trucks."

While the cargo changes from mission to mission, group cohesion and camaraderie between new Soldiers and veterans has not.

The Soldiers spent the afternoon under the Kuwait sun discussing the serious issue of tie-down procedures. Amidst the HETs, however, there was also laughter and headshakes as veteran drivers talked about methods that worked and about those that were not so successful during their previous tours.

"This was a lesson on safety and an example of leading by example by seasoned Soldiers," explained Staff Sgt. Edward Brewer, senior vehicle operator. "And by that, I don't mean by rank or age. I mean that there are many E-4s who bring just as much experience to the unit as anyone else."

Plant and others hope to have more of these classes, quarterly.



Sgt. Crystal Rothermel

Sgt. Aaron Osborn, 233rd Trans. Co. driver, uses chains and binders to secure a vehicle on the back of a truck during a class. This is Osborn's fourth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Any skill is lost if not done through repetition," Brewer said.

Until next time, the 233rd demonstrated that outdoor, hands-on tie-down training is an effective way to bring procedures, equipment, and new and veteran Soldiers together for a refresher and, of course, to tie up loose ends.

'Fit or Fat'



NAME: Santa Claus
AGE: Old
LOCATION: North Pole
FIT OR FAT: Fat

Santa Claus has volunteered one day a year to put down his cookies and egg nog, get off his sofa and deliver presents all over the world.

One does not have to be in shape to do this; just have flying reindeer.

How did you get started working out?

I really haven't begun. I'm afraid if I work out I'll lose weight and no longer be jolly.

How many days a week do you train?

It's not really a weekly thing more like a yearly thing. If I work out any more than that Mrs. Claus

might like what she sees and force me to work out daily.

Why do you like working out?

I don't. Who told you I did? They are lying.

What are your fitness goals?

Just not to exceed the weight limit of the sleigh and to still look good in my suit.

What do you eat to stay healthy?

I usually eat whatever Mrs. Claus cooks. When she isn't looking though I eat cookies, fruit-filled doughnuts, brownies and drink lots of egg nog. I can't help it I'm addicted.

Do you have any advice for servicemembers?

Don't be like me get in shape and stay healthy or expect coal for Christmas. Happy Holidays!



A Soldier's road to becoming an officer

Maj. Jackie Guthrie

377th TSC PAO

Servicemembers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom do not need to wait until after their deployment to pursue a career in the officer corps. While in theater they can start mapping the route down one of four roads into the officer ranks depending on their age, aptitude and attitude.

"This is a great life-changing opportunity," Maj. Gen. Bruce Casella told the more than 250 servicemembers gathered at the Camp Arifjan chapel Dec. 9 to learn about commissioning options.

Casella is the commander of the 377th Theater Support Command – the command that organized the event.

The road to the officer corps can be long or short, combined with civilian education or pursued on a full-or part-time basis. Each program has unique strengths and each are an integral part of developing those who will lead the Army into the future.

"We are looking for leaders, but we are especially looking for Soldiers," Maj. Amy Meeks said as she outlined the United States Military Academy at West Point program.

Meeks is a 1994 academy graduate, former admissions officer and currently serving in Kuwait with the 1st Personnel Command.

West Point admission requirements are strict. Applicants must be between the ages of 17 and 22, single, U.S. citizens, have a high school diploma and be recommended by their chain of command.

Soldiers interested in joining the long gray line will receive a fully funded four-year college education which includes tuition, room and board, and medical and dental care. At the academy cadets combine their military education with a four-year education.



Graphic by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Gregory Devereaux

It's not an easy four years, Meeks said.

"You will be challenged – academically and physically but if you have the desire you will succeed," she said.

Detailed information about the academy and its admission process is available on the internet at: www.usma.edu/.

Also combining education with military training is the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Offered at colleges and universities throughout the nation, cadets can compete for two-to four-year scholarships, continue current reserve component military service or make their education their full-time job while in school.

ROTC candidates must also meet age and aptitude requirements, be U.S. citizens and be accepted or enrolled in a participating college or university. Detailed information about ROTC can be found at: www.goarmy.com/rotc/.

Servicemembers who wish to pursue a commission separate from their civilian education can

choose between state and federal Officer Candidate School programs or direct commissioning programs.

To enroll in OCS, candidates must be at least 19, be U.S. citizens, have a four-year degree or higher or have completed 60 to 90 semester hours if pursuing the reserve-component option and be physically fit.

Federal OCS is a full-time, 14-week course at Fort Benning, Ga., and is outlined at: www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/opdistacc/OCS/COCS.htm. State OCS programs offer various options that combine full-and part-time training periods. While run by the National Guard, state OCS is also open to Army Reserve members.

Detailed information can be obtained at: www.1800goguard.com/officer/officer.html under "commissioning programs."

Reserve Soldiers who demonstrate potential and qualities of an officer are potential candidates for direct appointment.

Age, fitness, aptitude and health standards must also be met. Detailed information is available through your personnel officer.

Servicemembers can also obtain officer commissions through the Warrant Officer Program. Warrant officers are specialized experts and trainers in their career fields.

By gaining progressive levels of expertise and leadership, these leaders provide valuable guidance to commanders and organizations in their specialty. Warrant officers remain single-specialty officers whose career track is oriented toward progressing within their career field rather than focusing on increased levels of command and staff duty positions, like their commissioned-officer counterparts. Detailed information is available at usawocc.army.mil/.

For more information on any Army commissioning program contact Maj. Tina Anderson at DSN 430-5073 or by email: tina.anderson@arifjan.arcent.army.mil.

Reflect on service, sacrifices over holidays

Col. Brick Miller
ASG-Kuwait Commander

The holiday season is here and I'd like to take this opportunity to say thanks for the great job each of you have done during the past year.

As always, U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and civilians stand vigilant defending our freedom and that of our allies.

On behalf of our local Kuwaiti hosts and freedom-loving people everywhere I say, "Thanks, your service and all the sacrifices you endure are sincerely appreciated."

This time of year provides a great time to reflect on the things we all hold dear.

Our family members and loved ones, our fellow comrades in arms, and all the freedom we enjoy.

Every one of you has made a personal sacrifice to defend our country. This is not an obligation that most Americans are willing to undertake. Many of you are missing your children's birth, enduring personal hardships, enduring sicknesses in your families back home and yet you continue to do your duties. Your level of professionalism has not gone unnoticed.

As the New Year approaches,

I'd challenge each and every one of you to continue to achieve your standard of excellence. I challenge you to make the new year the safest ever by continuing to be vigilant, by not allowing complacency to settle in and by practicing good judgment at all times.

Judy and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thanks for all you do.

Troops have a lot to look forward to in Kuwait

Col. Brick Miller
ASG-Kuwait Commander

This article will inform individuals of camp life in Kuwait.

For anyone who was here during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, camp life in Kuwait has vastly improved since the days of Kabal. Soldiers sleep in clean, weather-proof tents or concrete buildings away from the elements, they eat three hot meals a day in a dining facility and morale recreational facilities have been established. Each camp takes on its own personality based on its mission.

Camp Victory, scheduled to close in the spring of 2006, is the primary redeployment camp with one of the best USO programs in the entire theater. There are many events and projects moving forward on Camp Victory. They are in the last phase of erecting the new-style American tents on Pad 7 in preparation for the upcoming surge. This will establish us at the required maximum bed down capacity per guidance. We have opened a second dining facility and food court with the following concessions: eateries, alteration shop, gift shop and a second Post Exchange. In addition, we have opened a second gym in one of the smaller tents to accommodate an overflow of additional gym equipment received recently. We have also, increased the connex storage capacity by upgrading our north sterile yard and upgraded internal camp roads to support heavy traffic flow.

Camp Victory is building a great working relationship with our neighbors, the 35th Kuwaiti Brigade. We have repaired a portion of their berm that runs adjacent to Victory. We are coordinating a soccer match with Camp Virginia and 35th Kuwaiti Bde. that we all will participate in during January 2006.

Virginia serves both deploying and rede-

ploying Soldiers. Camp Virginia has great things happening over the next month. A second and larger PX opened Dec. 15. By the beginning of next month a second physical fitness center will open with all new weight-lifting equipment and the addition of treadmills and stair-steppers to the camp. A new cyber café is moving onto the camp to increase the quality and number of computers available to Soldiers. The new troop medical clinic and dental clinic will open in mid-January into a new permanent building and out of tents. Also opening in mid-January is the Virginia education center featuring courses offered by Embry Riddle Aeronautics University and the University of Maryland. The post office, fire department, and Personnel Services Detachment are all expected to move out of tents and into relocatable buildings within the next month.

Camp Buehring is the sprawling desert complex for all deploying units that has its own airfield. Buehring built a new gym to enhance the quality of life for all servicemembers, the grand opening was Dec 17. The facility is moderately equipped but we expect to have it more adequately furnished in the near future. We have also replaced the old Bedouin style tents with the new vinyl, fire-resistant tents, including a new (soon-to-open) theater tent, an electronic gaming tent and a general-purpose tent. We have also seen the addition of a second free internet café to assist servicemembers in maintaining contact with their loved ones. The new PX area that opened early summer is almost complete. This area includes the addition of a new 4,500 square foot PX tent, along with new vendors.

We are in the process of inspecting and accepting 24 new RLBs for housing which will round out our barrack areas and will soon complete "trailer park number one" with

trailers moved from Camp Doha.

Camp Navistar, the smallest of the desert camps, is one of the busiest, servicing all convoys moving north. Upcoming projects on Navistar include the installation of additional speed bumps in movement control team north bound assembly lots and the fuel point. We will also be placing additional speed-control measures in the entry control point exit lanes. Camp units have volunteered to assist in the erection of concertina wire along the Iraq/Kuwait border in order to provide protection for convoys at Kuwaiti inspection lot.

The Morale, Welfare and Recreation office is currently rebuilding the sand volley ball court, making it larger and safer for the players. MWR projects also include the expansion of the basketball court and two additional basketball hoops. Requests have also been made for additional treadmills and weight-lifting equipment.

Camp rain water displacement and water evacuation plans have been formulated, awaiting the arrival of leased engineering equipment to begin process. A dry storage building is being constructed to house all dry goods for the DFAC, replacing four connex currently used. Installation of new guard tower stairs begins later this month also, awaiting stairs delivery.

Replacing all transient billeting tent with American-framed tents began recently. Replacement of all entry vestibules for permanent party housing was recently completed.

The LSA is continuing to build their camp and programs. Although the LSA has only been occupied since August, the camp has grown an MWR program with activities available every night, a food court, a 24 hours seven days a week fitness center and now a small movie trailer and Playstation trailer.

Community

happenings for Dec. 21 through Dec. 28

Ali Al Salem

For information call 442-2005

Arifjan

Wednesday

Win, Lose or Draw, 7 p.m., Zone 6

Community Center

Beatle Mania, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Flag football league, through Saturday, Zone 1 soccer field

Dodgeball tournament, through Monday

Softball tournament, through Wednesday

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Thursday

Chief of Chaplains prayer luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Zone 6 Dining Facility

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Friday

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Saturday

Christmas Eve caroling, 7 p.m., Zone 1 and 6 Community Centers

Yuletide Jazz Nght, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Christmas Eve Candlelight service, 8 p.m., Zone 1 chapel

Sunday

AMC band, jazz combo, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Zone 2 Dining Facility

AMC band, jazz combo, 5 - 8 p.m., Zone 1 Dining Facility

Christmas Bingo, 7 p.m., Zone 1 and 6

Community Centers

Monday

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

AMC band, Raw Material Show, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Flag football league post season tournament, through Wednesday, Zone 1 soccer field

Tuesday

Spades tournament, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Basketball tournament, through Wednesday

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

For more information call

430-1205/1302

Army LSA at Ali Al Salem

For information call 859-1060

Buehring

Wednesday

Fun run, 2.5k, 5:30 p.m., Hole in One Donut

Wreath decorations, all day, MWR Oasis

Thursday

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Pool tournament, 9-ball, 7 p.m., Recreation Center

Friday

Hip-hop dance, 9 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Saturday

Mistletoe Hop Christmas dance, 7 p.m.,

MWR Oasis

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., gym

Sunday

Christmas Movie Marathon, noon, Recreation Center

Hanukkah First Night Bingo, 7 p.m., MWR

Oasis

Tuesday

Pingpong tournament, 7 p.m., Recreation

Center

Wednesday

Jingle Bell Jog, 6:30 a.m., Hole in One Donut

Spoon tournament, 7 p.m., MWR Oasis

For more information call

828-1340

Kuwait Naval Base

Wednesday

Checkers, 7 p.m.

Friday

Bingo, 7 p.m., Fitness Center bench area

Saturday

Billiards, 1 p.m.

Sunday

Christmas 5k run, 6 a.m.

Wednesday

Dominoes, 7 p.m.

For more information call

839-1063

Navistar

Wednesday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Thursday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Friday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Monday

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent

Tuesday

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent

Wednesday

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent

Holiday fun run, 6 a.m., MWR tent

For more information call

844-1137

Spearhead/SPOD

For information call 825-1302

Victory

Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

OIF Christmas art contest begins

Movie Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Thursday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Barnyard horseshoe tournament, 6 p.m.,

MWR courts

Bazaar, 9 a.m., MFT

Friday

Bazaar, 9 a.m., MFT

Movie night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Saturday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Fabulous foosball tournament, MWR dayroom

Sunday

Christmas movie marathon, MWR dayroom

Ho, Ho, Ho Bash, gingerbread house contest,

Christmas dance, 7 p.m., MFT

Monday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Movie Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Tuesday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Movie Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

For more information call

823-1033

Virginia

Wednesday

Flag football, playoffs, softball field

Pool, 9-ball, 7 p.m., Community Center

Thursday

Pool tournament, 7 p.m., Sports Lounge

Friday

Flag football finals, 6 p.m., softball field

Saturday

Christmas Eve party, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Sunday

Fun run, 8 a.m., Dusty Room

Monday

Dominoes, 7 p.m., Community Center

Tuesday

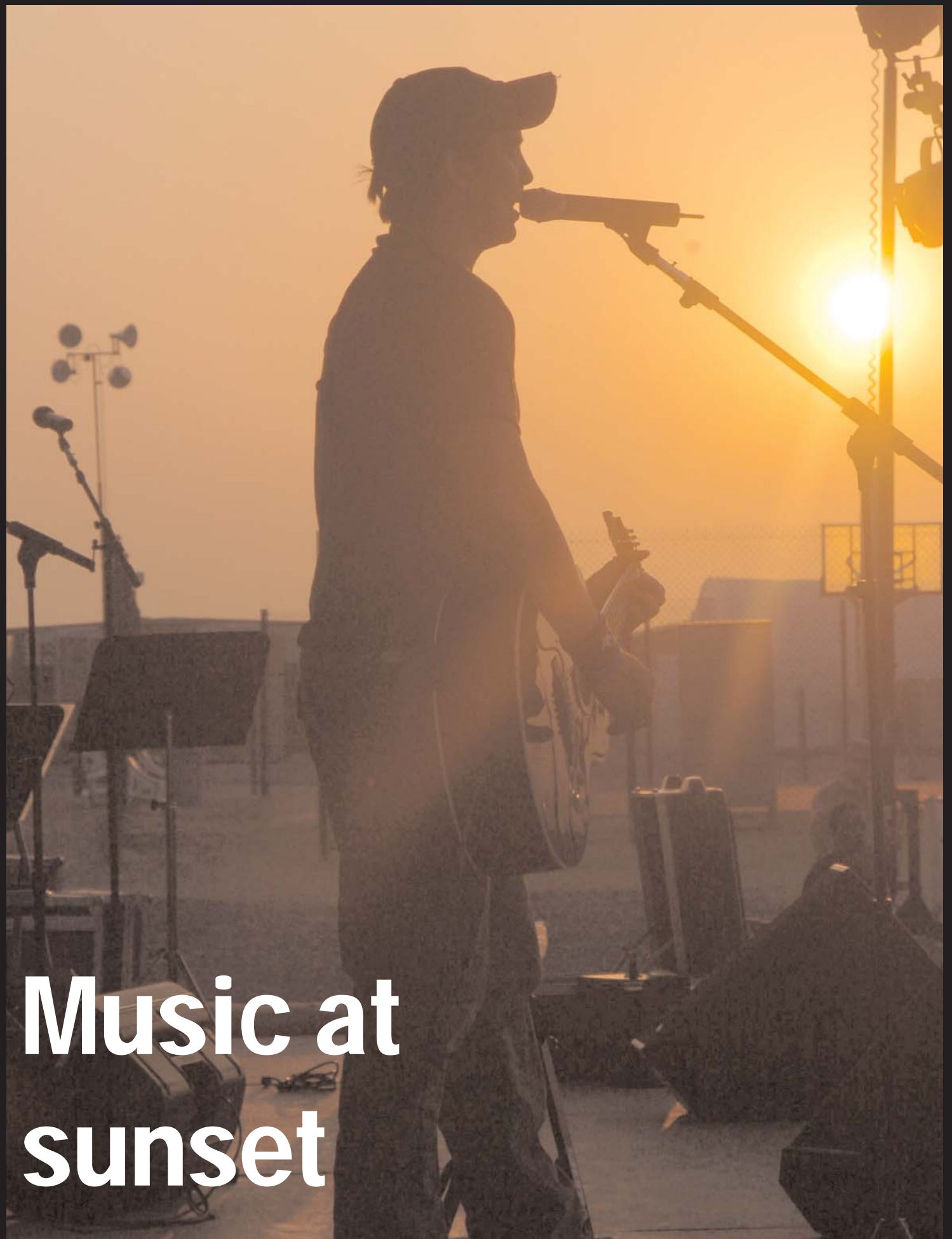
Unit Feud, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Wednesday

Volleyball, 6 vs. 6, 6 p.m., volleyball courts

For more information call

832-1045



**Music at
sunset**